

Shoreham and District  
Ornithological Society  
Spring Newsletter  
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Front Cover: Long-staying female Goldeneye at Brooklands in early 2024

## Editorial

I read recently that an American birder has become the first person to see 10,000 birds, about 90% of the global total. The latest version of the IOC World Bird List now contains 11,194 species. The recent taxonomic enthusiasm for splitting has increased the global total in the last few years and it is now possible to find numbers of new birds in old trip lists. Nevertheless world totals approaching 10,000 species represent a tremendous amount of birding effort and one has to admire the dedication of those birders pursuing high global targets.

Although I have not seen it formally expounded there is some maxim or principle that big lists are made with little birds and as many of these inhabit tropical forests twitching them is likely to be a somewhat arduous pastime. To reinforce this point bird number 10,000 was an Orange-tufted Spiderhunter seen in eastern Mindanao in the Philippines. Sounds like tropical forest sweaty humidity with added leeches – the latter a particular Asian hazard. This is why I much prefer desert and savanna birding.

Years ago I met a global lister in Goa where he had made a special trip to try for a flycatcher endemic to the western Ghats. We had seen the bird the day before but he was not successful. Although in general terms going to new places produces new birds to list, the law of diminishing returns eventually sets in and considerable effort will be required to see rarer or endemic species. It just becomes ever more difficult – perhaps best to stick to local endeavor and be happy when something unusual pitches up.

I nearly forgot: this is the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary edition of the new Newsletter. Many thanks to our past contributors as we move into the second decade.

Best wishes to you all.

Roger

# Autumn Migration around the Adur Estuary

Richard Allan

In the last newsletter I wrote about the Spring migration through the Adur Estuary SSSI highlighting the range of species seen. Well, I feel compelled now to write about the return passage of birds as it was even better! Many birders refer to the southerly passage of birds as Autumn migration although birds, often failed breeders, start returning in July so this account covers the migrating birds passing through the Adur Estuary from July to end of October.

## July

On the 3rd the first returning Black-tailed Godwit was seen. It was a sub-adult bird and only stayed for a brief time before getting flushed and heading off strongly south-east.

Common Sandpipers started to appear with 3 on the 6th, with birds favouring the west side mudflats north of the Railway bridge. Birds would often gather to roost in the salt marsh as dusk approached with a maximum of 9 counted on the 10th. After roosting overnight, birds could be seen feeding on the mudflats the next morning but usually dispersed fairly quickly. The first returning Whimbrel were seen with 2 on the 12th along with a stunning brick-red summer-plumaged Knot. Sadly, the Knot was on the west side north of the Railway Bridge and the sun made viewing and photos a little difficult.

Around mid-July Yellow-legged Gulls started to appear with 3 juveniles near the Pumping Station. Mediterranean Gulls are another gull species which tends to appear on the Adur around July and birds were seen on several days, often adults with nice full, black hoods and red bills.

A few Ringed Plovers were starting to reappear and numbers would build up over the next couple of months. More unusual were two Little Ringed Plover,

an adult and a juvenile, on the 16th and 17th. There was some speculation that they may have bred unobserved relatively locally but no one knows.

Another Black-tailed Godwit appeared on the evening of July 17th. I was alerted by a local birder and made a quick walk to the middle of the bridge. It was a stunning bird, in its gorgeous orange-red breeding plumage and probably of the Icelandic race *islandica*. It was happily feeding just north of the bridge. There was also a juvenile Yellow-legged Gull viewable on the south side of the Toll Bridge.



Several members of the public stopped to enquire about and appreciate the Godwit through the proffered binoculars and telescopes. They left a little more aware of Godwits and the Adur SSSI generally and probably didn't realise how lucky they'd been that I hadn't started giving them a lesson about the tertial wing pattern and facial markings of the nearby juvenile Yellow-legged Gull.

## **August**

August started with Common Sandpipers still feeding and roosting on the west bank. Small numbers of Whimbrel were about on many days, Ringed Plovers appeared in small numbers and 7 Lapwing were recorded. I'd like to think the Lapwing were returning to spend winter here but they could just as easily be birds which were passing through.

On the 5th the first return passage Greenshank appeared with 2 birds present. Greenshank continued to turn up in small numbers on several days right through till the end of September. The first sighting of Avocet was seen in August when 6 birds brightened a grey and wet evening. It was hard to get good views due to the distance and the light but at least 3 appeared to be juveniles.

By the 10th Ringed Plover numbers had increased to 19 with 4 Dunlin, 3 Whimbrel and increasing numbers of Redshank. A Little Gull was reported from the Pumping Station too.

Another uncommon wading bird for the Adur turned up on the 15th when an adult Sanderling spent a little time dashing around the mudflats on the eastern side south of the Toll Bridge. On the 15th, the first return passage Bar-tailed Godwit was present with a Greenshank and 2 Whimbrel. Ringed Plover numbers had now increased to 25.

The next few days saw Ringed Plover numbers increase to 56 on the 25th and at the end of the month the second Avocet record for the period with a single bird on the 27th. It appeared north of the Railway Bridge and was reported on Shoreham Birding Facebook amongst other places. I was out but saw the report and found the bird on my return home casually feeding along the eastern mudflats.

## **September**

As summer ended and autumn started things really picked up regarding birds migrating through or returning to the Adur Estuary.

On the 6th another Bar-tailed Godwit arrived for a few hours and there were still 56 Ringed Plovers, the same count as August 25th. Common Sandpipers were still around with a maximum count of 4 with the last record on the 28th. On the 7th a Spotted Redshank turned up. This is a bird rarely recorded on the Adur Estuary for some reason although a few birds regularly winter at places like Pagham Harbour. The bird was found by a local birder calling loudly right outside the Waterfront estate where I live. I was at Sainsbury's when I got the news and when I got home the bird had moved. However, it was quickly found again from Coronation Green and a few local birdwatchers gathered to appreciate this scarce Adur sighting. The next day it was feeding south of the Toll Bridge but soon departed. A measure of its scarcity can be judged by it being only the second sighting since 1982 for a very active local birder. There was a single record in the database for 2019 and before that a record in 2008 so for whatever reason it is a very scarce bird in the SDOS area.



Hot on the heels of the Spotted Redshank, another scarce passage wader turned up when a juvenile Curlew Sandpiper was found on September 10th. It was keeping company with Dunlin, allowing for some side-by-side comparisons,

and Ringed Plover whose numbers had increased to 91. There was also a juvenile Knot present; another bird which is relatively scarce locally although good numbers can be found in winter at Pagham harbour. Juvenile Knot, presumably the same bird, were then recorded from various places, but especially around the Houseboat Channel until the 18th. The Curlew Sandpiper finally departed, having been enjoyed by many local birders on the 22<sup>nd</sup>. During its 12 day stay it fattened up on molluscs, worms and other invertebrates before continuing its epic migration journey, potentially all the way to South Africa.

Another single Bar-tailed Godwit appeared on the 15th with a few Whimbrel. On the 18th 3 Ruff were found and photographed from Town Quay. On the 22<sup>nd</sup> Ringed Plover numbers had increased to 63 and Dunlin to 19 and joining them was a juvenile Sanderling. It could be picked out relatively easily by watching for the bird within the wader flock which was dashing about versus the more sedate Dunlin and the stop-start action of the Ringed Plovers. This bird stayed until the 27th.

Just two days later on the 24th, between the Railway and Old Toll bridges, Ringed Plover numbers had increased to 93, my maximum count for the Autumn along with 21 Dunlin, 16 Lapwing, 19 Redshank, the juvenile Sanderling and a single Bar-tailed Godwit.

Two adult Knot joined the gathering number of waders on the 27th and also three juvenile Little Stint were a very welcome sight. I first spotted the Little Stint looking from our balcony towards the Toll Bridge. I knew the Sanderling was still around but knew instinctively that the 3 small waders dashing around amongst the Dunlin and Ringed Plovers were not Sanderling. I made a quick walk along the Downs Link towards the Amsterdam Pub section and confirmed they were Little Stints by the white 'V' markings on their backs plus overall size, white underparts, bill size etc. As word quickly spread other birders appeared to catch these scarce visitors before they departed. However, we needn't have worried as one bird stayed around until October 8th and two



birds were seen on several other days so many got to enjoy these diminutive waders which regularly returned to the mudflats after each high tide.

By mid-September Turnstone numbers had grown to 40, and many of these birds will probably winter here. On September 28th I recorded my last Bar-tailed Godwit and Common Sandpiper of autumn and two days later on the 30th I recorded my last Whimbrel with 4 birds noted.

## **October**

Passage migration was clearly slowing down towards the end of September but there was still some noteworthy activity into October.

2 Black-tailed Godwits were recorded on October 2nd and a Little Stint lingered until the 8th when a single Grey Plover was recorded. It's hard to know if this was a bird passing through or one of the three birds which are wintering here.



On the subject of plovers, another scarce bird for the Estuary, Golden Plover turned up on the 11th. I found it mid-afternoon on the east side between the Railway and Toll Bridges and by early evening it was still around but had moved to the west side mudflats. By the next morning it had gone. Golden Plover is another of those birds which can be found in good numbers passing through and wintering at places like Rye and Pagham but seems to be scarce passing through the Adur. Also on the 11th were 55 Ringed Plover, 17 Dunlin and 18 Lapwing.

A surprise on the 12th was a single Avocet, the 3rd and last record for the Autumn of this charismatic and easily-recognisable species. The bird never landed but flew south down river, over the Railway Bridge and seemed to head towards Widewater. It wasn't reported again and shows how there's a lot of luck of being in the right place at the right time to record some of the Adur's scarcer birds.

By now Ringed Plover numbers had stabilised around 50-60 birds with 10-20 Dunlin associating with them. Wintering Lapwing numbers were starting to creep up with 34 counted on the last day of October and that evening a Short-eared Owl was seen briefly at dusk. It was flying west above the railway line disappearing beyond the airport. It was a sure sign winter was coming and autumn migration was over.

### **Summer / Autumn Migration Summary**

I think we enjoyed a really good migration period with a wide range of species, some of which are infrequently seen on the Adur. It demonstrates what a special place the Adur Estuary SSSI is.

The Spotted Redshank, Curlew Sandpiper and Little Stint were genuine scarce birds for the Adur. Plenty of birders from across Sussex and beyond travelled to see 'our' Little Stints indicating their scarcity these days. Avocets aren't recorded too often either on the Adur and we had records on three days. Avocets are one of those birds that really engages the public and the more visits we have then the more chance we have of engaging the public to



appreciate and protect the Adur Estuary.

Sanderling and Knot are not recorded often either but aren't so charismatic for the public. Sanderling, either a single adult bird (Aug 15th) or a single juvenile bird (Sept 10, 11 & 18th) were recorded on four occasions and Knot, including the breeding plumage adult on July 12 were recorded on five occasions.

Black-tailed and Bar-tailed Godwits seem to drop in on several days each month but seeing the summer plumage Black-Tailed Godwit in July from the Toll Bridge was a real birding highlight for me, and not just of 2023.

There was an almost constant presence of Whimbrel from mid-July to end of September and similar for Common Sandpiper. The Golden Plover was a treat to see too, and completed the whole range of regularly occurring Plovers for our area although being in mid-October it was also one of the last migrants to find food and a little sanctuary on the Adur Estuary SSSI.

So, in 2023 we recorded an excellent \*21 species of wader from July to end of October. Many of these birds fed on the eastern mudflats between the Railway and Old Toll Bridges. This is where crab tiles historically used to be but which Natural England asked to be removed back in September 2021. There's no doubt wading birds suffered some disturbance several times a day when bait collectors visited the crab tiles to pick the crabs sheltering under the tiles. Perhaps the numbers of wading birds and the range of species in 2023 is a benefit of crab tiles no longer being in place. Only more observation and recording is going to tell.

Let's see what Spring Migration 2024 turns up on the Adur.

\* The 21 species of wader were:

Greenshank, Common Redshank, Spotted Redshank, Ruff, Bar-tailed Godwit, Black-tailed Godwit, Ringed Plover, Little Ringed Plover, Lapwing, Grey Plover, Golden Plover, Common Sandpiper, Curlew Sandpiper, Avocet, Dunlin, Knot, Sanderling, Little Stint, Whimbrel, Oystercatcher, Turnstone.

## Keeping on Track

### John Maskell

As all members will now know, the SDOS was founded in 1953. Thus 2023 saw our Platinum Jubilee duly celebrating the Society's heritage. The year culminated in the publication of the excellent "Rare Birds and Rare Events" book which was compiled by Society stalwarts and expertly edited by Roger Smith. Last year was also a significant one for me as I was also "launched" in the year of Queen Elizabeth II's coronation! It was again a cause for reflection.

Having been birding for most of my life I paused to consider how far I had progressed. Gone are the days of twitching and nowadays it is garden birding that gives me the greatest pleasure. However, in January this year a report of a Hooded Crow in Cowes, during one of our regular visits to the Isle of Wight, proved too tempting. The particular bird had been seen regularly over the



winter in the grounds of the local College and as I scanned the sports field I immediately recognised a distinctive clump of trees in the middle and recalled that it was around these pines, as a teenager, I had competed in a mile race. In those days running was one of my main passions and birds were incidental. These days the only track that motivates me is the BTO's 'Birdtrack'!

As the Society has a number of new members, I thought that it might be a suitable time to give a brief introduction, based on my own experiences, of the British Trust for Ornithology's valuable and free on-line BirdTrack recording scheme.

At the personal level, BirdTrack enables individuals to store and manage their own bird records in the knowledge that their recorded observations will contribute to local, regional, national and international surveys and ultimately

conservation. The system allows one to opt for records to be automatically forwarded to county recorders so that at the Sussex level you know that the Society's Recorder will receive your records without you having to send in a separate list. The great thing is that you can log records for wherever you go, so long as you're prepared to register a site. Indeed, I know that over the years when travelling around, my records will have filtered through to county recorders in other parts of the UK.

It is also possible to input one's records from earlier years and during the various Covid "Lockdowns" I dug out my old notebooks and contributed data from the past 40-or-so years.

Once registered as a recorder data can also be entered using a computer or a mobile phone "app". You then need to set up sites that you visit regularly and where you record bird sightings. Initially the scheme encouraged you to use sites based on the Ordnance Survey's grid and for accuracy I try to stick to 1 km squares. Currently it is also possible to create specific sites using a polygon drawing tool.

The BTO statisticians prefer complete bird lists but you can just add "casual sightings" if that's all you've got time for. The recording system also has the facility to add your own "General" comments and "Weather" to each BirdTrack list. In addition to birds, other taxa can be recorded: mammals, reptiles, amphibians, odonata (dragonflies and damselflies), butterflies ... and orchids.

It is perhaps pertinent to point out that a BirdTrack "record" is a species logged not the number of birds. Thus, one record could be a single Blackbird or a murmuration of 2,000 Starlings. When entering the numerical data for each list you have the option of giving exact numbers of birds, approximate numbers (e.g. 30+) or just "seen". County Recorders in particular are very keen that we also use the facility to add further details regarding breeding evidence.

Using Birdtrack has become part of my daily routine. When you record birds at regular sites, you can then interrogate the data bases and look back at your highlights and trends. Birdtrack has certainly enhanced my birding and understanding of ornithology and I would urge anyone who hasn't yet tried it to give it a go. In my experience you will certainly be on the right track for endless free pleasure, without working up a sweat!

## The changing face of bird news

### Tony Benton

On 2 November last year, storm Ciaran was battering the south coast of England. I decided that I wouldn't venture out, after all - how could any sensible person go birding when the rain was lashing down? But then I looked at my phone, to see messages arriving about one or two Leach's Storm Petrels being seen along the Sussex coast. This got me interested: this was a bird that I had never seen before and was on my 'highly desired' list! As the morning waned, the messages arrived with more urgency - Leach's were definitely within the SDOS recording area and a few had been seen off the beach at Widewater. At this point panic kicked in, the wet weather clothing (head to foot) was donned, and I was out of the door as quick as Usain Bolt (well, nearly!!).

Down on the beach, I was richly rewarded with incredible views of Leach's Storm Petrels effortlessly shearing over the huge waves. I was delighted, and shared the excitement with another SDOS member who had also received the news via the modern 'grapevine'. We also ensured that the news was posted to the user group as rapidly as possible.

Birders have always had what we call a 'grapevine' - that's to say a means of sharing news of interesting, scarce, or even rare birds. Today, a Smart phone will link you to national bird information services (for a fee) and there are also lots of informal arrangements. And many of us can pick up emails to the user group whilst we are out in the wind and rain. But go back a few decades and it

was all very different. I am told that people would send a postcard to people who lacked a phone, or would cycle around to each other's houses. Often, birders heard about a rare sighting several weeks after the event!

All of which brings me to Nancy's: the legendary cafe in Cley, North Norfolk. This little cafe was actually the front room of a cottage on the High Street. It was also the nerve centre of British birding at that time. If you went to Nancy's, and every birder did, you took your turn to sit just inside the door and answer the phone. The phone rang constantly and you were always greeted with "anything about mate?". The drill was to then read out the latest sightings from the bird log kept next to the phone. Just occasionally someone would phone in with fresh news of a rarity, and this was duly noted in the log book. As you can imagine there were a number of flaws with this rather haphazard system of sharing bird news, and cold beans on toast was the downside of answering the constant incoming calls. But I remember taking my turn, and probably suffering from imposter syndrome.

At some point a couple of entrepreneurs realised that there was money to be made out of bird news and set up an automated system of sharing sightings. Basically, this was a glorified answer phone but it worked really well for a few years. Then it was overtaken by pagers, and more recently news came directly to your personal phone.

Nancy eventually retired and the cafe closed - but those really were the days! That little cafe was at the centre of bird news nationally, and I bet that a few readers of this article will remember it fondly.

Back in 1953 SDOS was formed, partly to help local ornithologists share sightings with each other. I wonder how those founders would regard the modern world, where via Watts App, Facebook, and the user group, sightings can be shared widely within seconds of the observations being made? How times have changed!

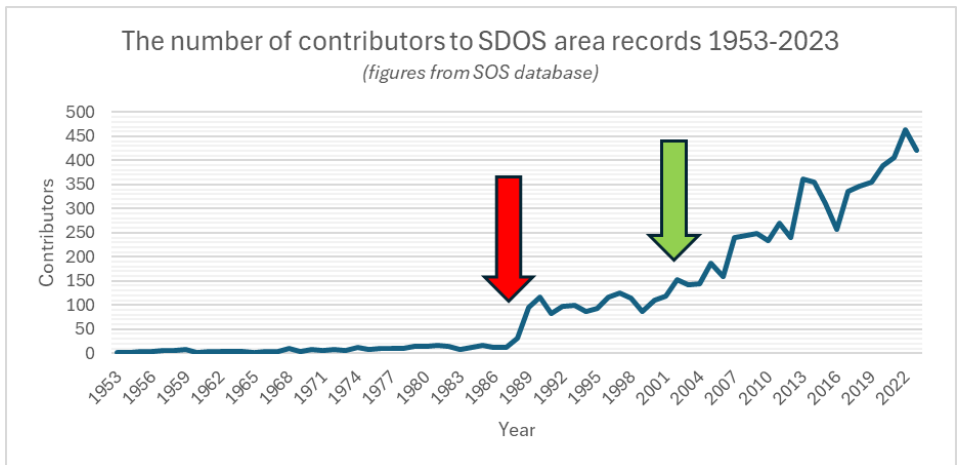


# Birds recorded in the SDOS area between July and December 2023

Clive Hope and John Newnham

Just over 21,000 SDOS area records for the last six months of 2023 had been uploaded into the Sussex Ornithological Society's (SOS) database by early February 2024. As usual, most of these sightings have been entered into the online systems but, at the time of compiling this report, records from the British Trust for Ornithology's national surveys such as the Breeding Bird Survey, Wetland Bird Survey or Garden Birdwatch and the last quarter's records from the Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology's eBird have not yet been incorporated.

These records were submitted by over 230 observers; the growing number of contributors can be seen in the following figure with the steepest rise starting with the appearance of the BTO's first on-line recording system Migration Watch; this rapidly evolved into Birdtrack.



*The number of observers contributing to SDOS area records in each year (1953-2021). The red arrow indicates the first year of computerising records and the green arrow the beginning of on-line recording (Migration Watch).*

The line prior to the computerising of county records in 1989 is unreliable but sample figures from the SDOS annual reports suggest the number of contributors to be nine in 1954, 16 in 1964, 19 in 1974 and 48 in 1984.

The records in this study period came from 172 sites, 46 of which with 100 or more sightings but 20 with just a single observation. The locations with most records were the River Adur (1666), West Tarring in Worthing (1449), Cissbury (1402), Brooklands (767) and the Henfield Levels (714). There were records from each of the days in this period with over 100 records being submitted on 96 dates and a range of just seven sightings on 19<sup>th</sup> September to 574 records for 27<sup>th</sup> August.

A total of 189 different species have so far been recorded in this period but assessment and verification of these observation is far from complete. This total is just two less than for the first six months of the year.

Perhaps the highlights and species with only one record, listed in a near chronological order, include the areas only **Turtle Dove** record at Woods Mill on 12<sup>th</sup> July. The first of three **White-tailed Eagle** records occurred on the 3<sup>rd</sup> August with two seen at Annington on 21<sup>st</sup> November. Two leaf warblers trapped in August were of interest when a northern "*acredula*" **Willow Warbler** was in Ladywell on the 9<sup>th</sup> and a **Wood Warbler** at Cissbury on the 20<sup>th</sup>. A **Red-backed Shrike** at Mill Hill was recorded on at least ten days between 27<sup>th</sup> August and 13<sup>th</sup> September; this and an **Aquatic Warbler** near Upper Beeding between 10<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> September was seen and photographed by many observers. There then followed a number of species only recorded on one date:- a **Ruff** at Goring Gap on 13<sup>th</sup> September, four **Manx Shearwaters** off Hove on 20<sup>th</sup> September, a **Dartford Warbler** trapped in Ladywell on 23<sup>rd</sup> September, a **Wheatear** considered to be the Greenland form on 4<sup>th</sup> October, an **Olive-backed Pipit** at Cissbury (the first for our recording area if accepted) on 14<sup>th</sup> October, a **Rock Pipit** of the Scandinavian form at Widewater on 17<sup>th</sup> October and finally a **Barred Warbler** at Beeding Hill on 31<sup>st</sup> October.

Autumn storms are often disappointing in producing interesting birds in our area. Not so with Storm Ciarán in early November which was responsible for many members seeing at least one species for the first time. The outstanding bird recorded was **Leach's Petrel** which was seen, mainly flying eastward, from many beaches on the 2<sup>nd</sup> with fewer, mainly flying westward on the 3<sup>rd</sup>. On the 2<sup>nd</sup> at least 47 were recorded at Widewater and 38 between Worthing and Goring. Other species were in much lower numbers with a single **Balearic Shearwater** seen offshore at Widewater on the 1<sup>st</sup>, **Grey Phalaropes** at Widewater on both the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup>, a **Sabine's Gull** at Hove on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup>, **Pomarine Skuas** passed Widewater and Ferring on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> respectively, and one or two **Storm Petrels** recorded by the seawatchers.

Thereafter, a **Great White Egret** was seen on the upper Adur Levels on 25<sup>th</sup> November and 16<sup>th</sup> December and a **Sooty Shearwater** flew passed Worthing on 4<sup>th</sup> December. Unfortunately, the large national invasion of **Waxwings** barely reached our area the species being recorded on just three dates between 22<sup>nd</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup> December with nine near Henfield on the former date being the largest group.

The following large table lists the other species recorded in this period showing the number of days each species has been recorded, the first and last date and the maximum count for each. Where there are several days with the same maximum count, mostly one or two birds, then just one record is shown.

Species Name	Dates	First date	Last date	Maximum count
Brent Goose	28	01-Oct	30-Dec	163 on 01-Nov at Worthing
Canada Goose	19	02-Jul	29-Dec	410 on 23-Dec at Henfield Levels
Greylag Goose	19	21-Aug	29-Dec	365 on 29-Dec at Henfield Levels
White-fronted Goose	2	22-Dec	29-Dec	7 on 29-Dec at Henfield Levels
Mute Swan	128	02-Jul	31-Dec	37 on 13-Jul at R. Adur
Bewick's Swan	6	25-Nov	30-Dec	7 on 22-Dec at Henfield Levels
Egyptian Goose	10	18-Aug	29-Dec	15 on 30-Nov at Adur Levels
Common Shelduck	2	07-Aug	17-Nov	18 on 07-Aug at Worthing
Shoveler	13	30-Aug	29-Dec	37 on 05-Dec at Henfield Levels

Gadwall	7	18-Aug	29-Dec	15 on 22-Dec at Henfield Levels
Eurasian Wigeon	11	07-Oct	29-Dec	390 on 29-Dec at Henfield Levels
Mallard	95	02-Jul	31-Dec	166 on 17-Dec at Henfield Levels
Pintail	9	05-Nov	29-Dec	89 on 29-Dec at Henfield Levels
Eurasian Teal	41	18-Aug	29-Dec	400 on 18-Dec at Henfield Levels
Common Pochard	4	01-Aug	22-Nov	3 on 26-Sep at Brooklands
Tufted Duck	2	27-Sep	18-Dec	2 on 18-Dec at Henfield Levels
Common Eider	13	30-Oct	29-Dec	5 on 30-Oct at Worthing
Common Scoter	13	17-Jul	30-Dec	20 on 28-Nov at Worthing
Goosander	15	16-Oct	01-Dec	5 on 16-Oct at R. Adur
Red-breasted Merganser	11	01-Nov	30-Dec	29 on 02-Dec at Worthing
Grey Partridge	14	03-Jul	08-Dec	7 on 24-Nov at No-Mans Land
Common Pheasant	85	01-Jul	29-Dec	30 on 31-Aug at Ditchling Beacon
Quail	6	01-Jul	23-Aug	3 on 13-Jul at Chantry Hill
Red-legged Partridge	29	13-Jul	14-Dec	110 on 29-Sep at Lower Standean
Common Swift	42	01-Jul	02-Sep	46 on 29-Jul at Mill Hill
Feral Pigeon	156	02-Jul	31-Dec	300 on 28-Sep at R. Adur
Stock Dove	100	02-Jul	29-Dec	400 on 28-Nov at No-Mans Land
Woodpigeon	180	01-Jul	31-Dec	800 on 24-Aug at Chantry Hill
Collared Dove	129	01-Jul	31-Dec	70 on 12-Sep at Mile Oak
Water Rail	8	06-Nov	30-Dec	1 on 06-Nov at Sheepcote Valley
Moorhen	84	02-Jul	30-Dec	12 on 02-Sep at Ferring
Coot	50	02-Jul	30-Dec	70 on 20-Oct at Brooklands
Little Grebe	47	02-Jul	31-Dec	9 on 11-Nov at Widewater
Great Crested Grebe	17	17-Jul	30-Dec	16 on 01-Dec at Goring Gap
Oystercatcher	82	04-Jul	29-Dec	40 on 18-Dec at Ferring
Avocet	4	17-Jul	12-Oct	6 on 05-Aug at R. Adur
Lapwing	70	05-Jul	30-Dec	100 on 30-Nov at Adur Levels
Golden Plover	5	18-Sep	02-Dec	5 on 21-Sep at South Downs
Grey Plover	24	08-Oct	18-Dec	12 on 20-Nov at Goring Gap
Ringed Plover	76	10-Jul	26-Nov	100 on 19-Nov at Widewater
Little Ringed Plover	3	13-Jul	17-Jul	2 on 16-Jul at R. Adur
Eurasian Whimbrel	40	06-Jul	30-Sep	10 on 03-Aug at R. Adur
Curlew	17	03-Jul	22-Dec	2 on 17-Nov at Goring Gap
Bar-tailed Godwit	15	21-Aug	05-Oct	3 on 23-Sep at Adur Saltings

Black-tailed Godwit	6	03-Jul	02-Oct	2 on 15-Jul at Worthing
Turnstone	92	30-Jul	31-Dec	84 on 13-Sep at Goring Gap
Knot	8	12-Jul	30-Sep	2 on 23-Sep at Adur Saltings
Curlew Sandpiper	13	20-Aug	22-Sep	1 on 20-Aug at R. Adur
Sanderling	16	05-Aug	07-Dec	80 on 07-Nov at Worthing
Dunlin	87	12-Jul	30-Dec	65 on 21-Nov at R. Adur
Purple Sandpiper	6	13-Sep	16-Dec	1 on 13-Sep at Brighton
Little Stint	13	27-Sep	20-Oct	3 on 27-Sep at Adur Saltings
Woodcock	2	17-Dec	23-Dec	3 on 17-Dec at Cissbury
Common Snipe	20	02-Sep	22-Dec	100 on 13-Dec at Adur Saltings
Common Sandpiper	50	03-Jul	26-Dec	9 on 10-Jul at R. Adur
Green Sandpiper	5	03-Aug	29-Dec	1 on 03-Aug at Henfield Levels
Common Redshank	108	05-Jul	31-Dec	51 on 26-Nov at Adur Saltings
Spotted Redshank	2	07-Sep	17-Oct	1 on 07-Sep at R. Adur
Greenshank	37	17-Jul	23-Dec	3 on 10-Sep at R. Adur
Kittiwake	10	15-Jul	30-Dec	12 on 13-Nov at Widewater
Black-headed Gull	155	01-Jul	31-Dec	1200 on 18-Dec at Henfield Levels
Little Gull	17	10-Aug	31-Dec	24 on 02-Nov at Worthing
Mediterranean Gull	58	03-Jul	29-Dec	150 on 07-Nov at Worthing
Common Gull	67	15-Jul	30-Dec	480 on 20-Dec at R. Adur
Great Black-backed Gull	130	03-Jul	31-Dec	114 on 23-Oct at R. Adur
Herring Gull	183	01-Jul	31-Dec	1170 on 07-Sep at R. Adur
Caspian Gull	4	05-Aug	19-Dec	6 on 07-Dec at Goring
Yellow-legged Gull	28	10-Jul	29-Dec	4 on 15-Jul at R. Adur
Lesser Black-backed Gull	57	02-Jul	29-Dec	20 on 05-Aug at R. Adur
Sandwich Tern	34	13-Jul	16-Nov	28 on 30-Aug at Goring Gap
Common Tern	8	10-Jul	05-Nov	5 on 10-Jul at Worthing
Arctic Skua	3	26-Sep	03-Nov	1 on 26-Sep at Worthing
Razorbill	4	21-Oct	30-Dec	7 on 30-Dec at Worthing
Unidentified auk spp	7	26-Sep	30-Dec	150 on 28-Nov at Worthing
Red-throated Diver	19	20-Oct	31-Dec	30 on 15-Dec at Worthing
Black-throated Diver	2	20-Nov	30-Dec	1 on 20-Nov at Goring Gap
Great Northern Diver	13	05-Nov	31-Dec	2 on 28-Nov at Worthing
Unidentified diver spp	5	03-Nov	10-Dec	6 on 10-Dec at Worthing
Fulmar	2	24-Dec	30-Dec	4 on 24-Dec at Brighton

Gannet	34	14-Jul	30-Dec	104 on 04-Dec at Worthing
Cormorant	112	04-Jul	31-Dec	80 on 27-Aug at Brighton
Shag	3	25-Sep	03-Nov	1 on 25-Sep at Brighton Marina
Cattle Egret	3	23-Sep	07-Dec	5 on 07-Dec at Small Dole
Grey Heron	99	01-Jul	29-Dec	10 on 15-Dec at R. Adur
Little Egret	122	04-Jul	30-Dec	35 on 23-Aug at Goring Gap
Osprey	3	19-Aug	31-Oct	1 on 27-Aug at Cissbury
Honey-buzzard	3	30-Aug	25-Sep	1 on 30-Aug at Steyning
Sparrowhawk	98	02-Jul	26-Dec	3 on 06-Aug at Worthing
Marsh Harrier	11	01-Aug	25-Sep	1 on 01-Aug at Findon Park
Hen Harrier	8	25-Jul	28-Dec	1 on 23-Oct at Perching Hill
Red Kite	71	01-Jul	30-Dec	8 on 29-Sep at Lower Standean
Common Buzzard	133	01-Jul	30-Dec	10 on 22-Sep at Devils Dyke
Barn Owl	9	01-Jul	22-Nov	2 on 03-Jul at Coombes
Little Owl	5	14-Aug	01-Dec	1 on 14-Aug at Beeding Hill
Short-eared Owl	6	03-Sep	10-Nov	2 on 10-Nov at Beeding Brooks
Tawny Owl	28	07-Jul	17-Dec	3 on 28-Sep at Ladywell
Kingfisher	60	02-Jul	27-Dec	3 on 09-Aug at Ladywell
Great Spotted Woodpecker	108	02-Jul	30-Dec	5 on 06-Dec at Steyning Round Hill
Green Woodpecker	97	01-Jul	29-Dec	5 on 30-Sep at Edburton
Kestrel	136	01-Jul	30-Dec	5 on 25-Aug at South Downs
Merlin	9	26-Sep	26-Dec	1 on 26-Sep at Beeding Hill
Hobby	18	18-Jul	01-Oct	2 on 27-Aug at Cissbury
Peregrine	41	10-Jul	26-Dec	2 on 26-Aug at Mill Hill
Ring-necked Parakeet	8	14-Jul	23-Dec	1 on 14-Jul at Shoreham-by-Sea
Jay	98	01-Jul	30-Dec	4 on 16-Aug at Mill Hill
Magpie	173	01-Jul	31-Dec	23 on 31-Oct at Edburton
Jackdaw	164	01-Jul	31-Dec	300 on 25-Jul at No-Mans Land
Rook	117	01-Jul	28-Dec	350 on 26-Sep at Beeding Hill
Carrion Crow	176	01-Jul	31-Dec	275 on 03-Aug at Steyning WTW
Raven	78	02-Jul	26-Dec	20 on 08-Oct at Sompting
Coal Tit	43	02-Jul	30-Dec	6 on 12-Sep at Chanctonbury
Marsh Tit	33	02-Jul	31-Dec	4 on 02-Jul at Chanctonbury
Blue Tit	160	02-Jul	31-Dec	45 on 30-Sep at Edburton
Great Tit	157	01-Jul	31-Dec	15 on 31-Aug at Highdown

Skylark	116	01-Jul	29-Dec	200 on 26-Nov at Beeding Hill
Sand Martin	24	02-Jul	25-Sep	100 on 09-Sep at Lancing Clump
Barn Swallow	99	01-Jul	29-Nov	400 on 17-Sep at Goring Gap
House Martin	62	03-Jul	21-Oct	1200 on 09-Sep at Cissbury
Cetti's Warbler	56	18-Jul	26-Dec	6 on 12-Nov at Steyning Levels
Long-tailed Tit	105	02-Jul	29-Dec	22 on 09-Nov at Ferring
Yellow-browed Warbler	6	15-Dec	20-Dec	1 on 15-Dec at Ferring
Willow Warbler	52	02-Jul	04-Oct	121 on 16-Aug at Ladywell
Chiffchaff	125	01-Jul	30-Dec	170 on 23-Sep at Ladywell
Sedge Warbler	21	01-Jul	14-Sep	2 on 01-Jul at Beeding Brooks
Reed Warbler	34	02-Jul	17-Sep	6 on 09-Aug at Ladywell
Grasshopper Warbler	2	27-Aug	10-Sep	1 on 27-Aug at Ladywell
Blackcap	107	01-Jul	31-Dec	113 on 14-Sep at Cissbury
Garden Warbler	23	30-Jul	14-Sep	6 on 13-Aug at Cissbury
Lesser Whitethroat	34	07-Jul	23-Sep	4 on 22-Aug at Adur Levels
Common Whitethroat	76	01-Jul	01-Oct	155 on 28-Aug at Cissbury
Firecrest	30	02-Jul	17-Dec	4 on 08-Oct at Stanmer Park
Goldcrest	84	04-Jul	29-Dec	24 on 22-Oct at Cissbury
Wren	149	01-Jul	31-Dec	16 on 06-Dec at Steyning Round Hill
Nuthatch	35	02-Jul	30-Dec	3 on 12-Sep at Chanctonbury
Eurasian Treecreeper	20	02-Jul	22-Dec	8 on 02-Jul at Chanctonbury
Common Starling	156	01-Jul	31-Dec	900 on 02-Dec at Brooklands
Song Thrush	98	01-Jul	29-Dec	15 on 08-Sep at Sheepcote Valley
Mistle Thrush	36	03-Jul	23-Dec	12 on 04-Aug at Ditchling Beacon
Redwing	43	10-Oct	30-Dec	200 on 17-Dec at Cissbury
Blackbird	174	01-Jul	30-Dec	40 on 10-Oct at Sheepcote Valley
Fieldfare	39	15-Oct	30-Dec	450 on 12-Nov at Adur Levels
Ring Ouzel	7	13-Sep	23-Oct	4 on 10-Oct at Cissbury
Spotted Flycatcher	34	02-Jul	03-Oct	34 on 04-Sep at Cissbury
Robin	173	01-Jul	31-Dec	25 on 24-Aug at Ferring
Pied Flycatcher	12	06-Aug	10-Sep	2 on 20-Aug at Cissbury
Black Redstart	19	03-Nov	31-Dec	3 on 15-Dec at Southwick
Common Redstart	35	16-Jul	22-Sep	13 on 28-Aug at Cissbury
Whinchat	32	25-Jul	29-Dec	6 on 03-Sep at Cissbury
Eurasian Stonechat	113	03-Jul	29-Dec	15 on 23-Aug at Findon Park

Northern Wheatear	73	25-Jul	20-Dec	22 on 25-Aug at Beeding Hill
House Sparrow	182	01-Jul	31-Dec	143 on 18-Aug at Goring Gap
Duncock	149	01-Jul	30-Dec	17 on 21-Sep at Sheepcote Valley
Yellow Wagtail	29	10-Jul	29-Sep	61 on 04-Sep at Goring Gap
Grey Wagtail	43	10-Jul	22-Dec	8 on 04-Sep at Goring Gap
Pied Wagtail	115	01-Jul	29-Dec	300 on 17-Dec at Brighton
Meadow Pipit	122	01-Jul	29-Dec	350 on 29-Sep at No-Mans Land
Tree Pipit	21	02-Jul	14-Sep	8 on 30-Aug at Highdown
Rock Pipit	12	02-Oct	24-Dec	2 on 31-Oct at R. Adur
Chaffinch	97	01-Jul	30-Dec	100 on 26-Nov at Edburton
Brambling	2	14-Oct	06-Nov	2 on 06-Nov at Sheepcote Valley
Bullfinch	49	02-Jul	20-Dec	6 on 06-Dec at Steyning Round Hill
Greenfinch	104	01-Jul	31-Dec	21 on 25-Sep at Cissbury Fields
Linnet	121	01-Jul	30-Dec	450 on 04-Aug at No-Mans Land
Lesser Redpoll	13	17-Sep	20-Nov	30 on 22-Oct at Ladywell
Common Crossbill	3	25-Jul	11-Sep	2 on 25-Jul at Cissbury
Goldfinch	161	01-Jul	31-Dec	1251 on 16-Oct at Goring Gap
Siskin	29	02-Sep	22-Dec	123 on 16-Oct at Goring Gap
Corn Bunting	79	01-Jul	26-Dec	75 on 02-Dec at Lower Standean
Yellowhammer	85	01-Jul	26-Dec	66 on 26-Nov at Edburton
Reed Bunting	36	02-Jul	20-Dec	50 on 26-Nov at Edburton
Lord Derby's Parakeet	13	12-Jul	23-Dec	1 on 12-Jul at Shoreham-by-Sea

No species was recorded on each day in this period but both Woodpigeon and Herring Gull came fairly close. Although this summary provides little detail and analysis of the plethora of observations from our recording area it hopefully provides an insight into the range of species, their abundance and occurrence locally.

Thanks to all the observers, far too numerous to name, who have contributed records in our recording area during this period.



# Ringling at Cissbury 2023

## Val Bentley

It was in 1984 that the first bird was ringed at Cissbury, according to the information to hand on the IPMR database – and confirmed by Brian Clay who has looked at the original field data entry book! After negotiations with the Worthing Borough Council, permission was initially given to ring in a slightly different area from the one currently in operation. The first session was on 29 July that year, when it appears that Phil Clay and Chris Fox sent 10 birds on their way bearing nice shiny adornments, the very first being a Wren at 6 am. Subsequently the National Trust allowed the group to ring on the north-east side of the hill on which the historically important Cissbury Ring is situated. There have been many other changes since then, both in personnel and in the numbers of the various species which turn up in the nets - more later.

In 2023, our 40th anniversary year, the team was able to undertake a total of 36 sessions, starting on 5 February and continuing to a final visit on 17 December. This was an increase of eight over 2022; total captures rose approx. 40% from 1313 to 1857, and the number of new birds by 52%, from 1075 to 1633, and almost double that in the unproductive year of 2021. This increase was predominantly made up of birds passing through the site on migration, such as Blackcaps, Chiffchaffs and Willow Warblers. We averaged 52 birds per session during the year, ranging from nine on 11 February to 166 on 14 September.

The two lead ringers at the site were Chrissi Twitchen and myself. We are both holders of BTO “S” permits, enabling us to train others. “C” permit holders Peter Denyer and David Campbell were both able to assist on a few visits, though Pete again spent most of the year at Landguard Bird Observatory. Alex Rosenfeld continued his training this year handling more birds than anyone else in the team despite a two-month absence assisting with the long-running Wytham Woods project in Oxfordshire. Mya Bambrick and Toby

Stapleton came along when they were not pursuing their university studies. Trainee Jack Hughes joined us in the summer and towards the end of the year prospective trainee Kate Woodhouse was another new face at the table. Other ringers to visit were Steven Robinson and Darrin Madgin.

There was a little more variety this year too. The total of 34 different species was two more than in 2022, and the same as in 2021. Once again, conditions were never quite right for catching any hirundines. The table below gives the results of our efforts.

The final column is the figure for the total captures (including retraps and controls), the penultimate column shows new birds ringed and \*in brackets the number of different individuals of the species i.e. including retraps ringed in previous years and controls. For comparison, also shown are totals for new birds ringed during each of the previous four years. Species whose names are in *italics* were ringed in at least one of the previous four years, but not in 2023, while the four species in **bold** were ringed in 2023 but not in the previous four years.

<b>Species</b>	<b>2019 New</b>	<b>2020 New</b>	<b>2021 New</b>	<b>2022 New</b>	<b>2023 New (New for Year*)</b>	<b>2023 Total Captures (including retraps)</b>
Blackbird	20	19	18	26	16 (29)	36
Blackcap	527	741	319	428	608 (611)	642
Blue Tit	39	14	35	31	27 (29)	38
Bullfinch	14	27	14	23	13 (16)	23
Chaffinch	4	9	6	9	2	2
Chiffchaff	142	244	148	142	363 (366)	372
<i>Coal Tit</i>	1	-	-	-	-	-
Dunnock	35	30	26	31	32 (47)	74
Firecrest	9	3	5	6	14 (15)	17
Garden Warbler	10	10	3	8	16	16

Goldcrest	92	24	11	54	101 (107)	119
Goldfinch	3	13	8	7	16 (17)	17
Grass-hopper Warbler	1	2	-	1	1	1
Great Spotted Woodpecker	-	-	-	2	-	-
Great Tit	27	9	10	13	22 (26)	29
Greenfinch	1	9	4	9	21	21
House Martin	-	6	-	-	-	-
<b>Jay</b>	-	-	-	-	1	1
Kestrel	1	1	-	-	-	-
Lesser Redpoll	-	63	22	19	51	51
Lesser White-throat	3	5	2	6	4	4
Linnet	-	-	1	1	-	-
Long-tailed Tit	61	16	18	25	28 (34)	41
Magpie	1	1	-	-	-	-
Marsh Tit	2	4	-	-	2	3
Nightingale	-	2	1	-	-	-
<b>Nuthatch</b>	-	-	-	-	1	1
Pied Flycatcher	-	-	-	1	-	-
Redstart	1	1	-	2	7	7
Redwing	19	13	22	8	3	3
Reed Warbler	5	5	6	3	4	4
Robin	47	62	47	66	60 (70)	85
Sedge Warbler	2	-	-	-	2	2
Siskin	-	19	-	-	7	7
Song Thrush	17	22	22	17	23 (25)	33

Sparrow-hawk	1	-	2	-	2	2
Spotted Flycatcher	2	4	2	5	2	2
Swallow	-	-	1	-	-	-
Tree Pipit	-	3	-	1	-	-
Tree-creeper	3	-	-	2	2 (3)	4
White-throat	45	53	15	42	55	63
Willow Warbler	118	135	46	65	90	90
Wood Pigeon	2	1	--	-	-	-
<b>Wood Warbler</b>	-	-	-	-	1	1
Wren	20	23	27	22	34 (37)	44
<b>Yellow-hammer</b>	-	-	-	-	2	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>1275</b>	<b>1593</b>	<b>841</b>	<b>1075</b>	<b>1633 (1706)</b>	<b>1857</b>

**Table 1. Captures at Cissbury 2019-2023**

### The Ringing Year

#### **February to April (6 sessions, 111 captures, 62 new)**

Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI) had been affecting some species, mainly seabirds, and the BTO set up some protocols for ringers to prevent spreading the disease to other species. Hence we started the year armed with sprays, and had to disinfect ourselves, nets and other equipment, before, during and after each session.

Between the first session on 7 February and the end of April just 111 birds were trapped. One Firecrest, ringed on 17 October 2021 was retrapped on the second February visit, becoming the first of the species known to have survived two winters here.

Paying her first visit to the site in early April was one of the grazing herd of cows, which my husband and myself found happily chewing the cud at the bottom of one of the net rides when we were engaged in a tidying session. With some effort we ushered her out of the gate and back to her friends. We were not to have such an easy time with other bovine incursions during the rest of the year.

The first Blackcaps, Chiffchaffs and Willow Warblers arrived on the 7 April; the Blackcaps were females and the Willow Warblers most likely males to judge by their wing lengths, though none of the latter now stay to breed. The same day a Long-tailed Tit ringed in the autumn of 2018 was retrapped.

### **May to July (9 sessions, 187 captures, 130 new)**

The first Whitethroat was trapped on 7 May and a week later a Jay was ringed, only the 19th trapped at Cissbury and the first since 2015. The first juveniles appeared on 20 May, two young Blackbirds and a Song Thrush, and on 4 June there were three juvenile Long-tailed Tits. Accompanying the first young Blackcaps the following week was a really surprising youngster. Though the species has been expanding its range in recent years only one previous Nuthatch had been ringed here, in September 2012, and their calls are very rarely heard, so finding a subtly coloured juvenile took us aback. A nice Cream-spot Tiger moth was an interesting non-avian find by Alex.

The first session in July saw cowpats on the paths again and we had to usher no less than five cows out of the site before we could set the nets. Fortunately there were six of us to do the “herding” and the ladies were very co-operative! That day produced the first Marsh Tit since 2020; encouragingly it was a juvenile, so had hatched not too far away. Two more of this species were ringed later in the summer.

Residents were still busy producing young when the first returning migrants were found on 25 July, a Sedge Warbler and Willow Warbler, both hatched

this year, and on the 30th a young Yellowhammer was the first of the species since 2017; they used to be more frequent.



Jay (adult) 13/5/23



Cream-spot Tiger Moth 10/6/23

### **August & September (12 sessions, 875 captures, 827 new)**

Migrants to the fore during these months, starting with Willow Warblers, of which 30 were ringed on 2 August. Whitethroats and Garden Warblers followed on the 13th, when we also ringed the first of the seven Redstarts of 2023. On a solo session on the 20th, I was ringing a run of Willow Warblers, then realised one was a Wood Warbler – unfortunately that surprised me so much I let the bird fly out of the weighing pot before I could get the camera out! By the end of the month Blackcap became the most likely species to be encountered, and a juvenile Bullfinch on the 30th was the first proof that they had bred on site in 2023.

Only two Spotted Flycatchers ventured into the nets, both at the start of September. By mid-month Blackcaps were definitely the order of the day, and of 166 birds trapped on 14th 113 were Blackcaps of which only one was a retrap. Chiffchaffs started to outnumber Blackcaps by the end of the month,

with a ratio of 95:46 on the 30th when Chrissi and Alex had a grand total of 164 birds – luckily Angelica (Alex’s partner) was on hand to do the scribing.



Redstart (male) 20/8/23



Spotted Flycatcher (1st year) 3/9/23

### **October to December (9 sessions, 522 captures, 460 new)**

The first Lesser Redpolls of the year on 4 October heralded the latter half of autumn, though Blackcaps and Chiffchaffs were still moving through. More Lesser Redpolls arrived on the 7th along with three Siskins, a species not often encountered by us. Although 40 have been ringed, they have been confined to only five years, 1988 (7), 1991 (1), 1997 (6), 2020 (19) and 2023 (7). An influx of Goldcrests started in mid-October, with 16 ringed on the 15th, and 24 on the 22nd, plus two Firecrests on each session, and Chiffchaffs still in double figures. November brought more ‘crests, the best catch of Lesser Redpolls with 22 on the 5th, and still the occasional Chiffchaff – maybe incoming winter visitors by now? There was just the one visit in December, on the 17th, which brought us the only two Redwings of the second winter period.

## **Residents**

From our very small sample of juveniles and first year birds ringed until the end of September, Dunnocks, Great Tits and Wrens produced good numbers of young in 2023, while Blackbird, Blue Tit and Robin had an average year. The table below includes only juveniles and first year birds trapped until the end of September; these are most likely to have been hatched on or near the site. On a positive note there were five young Song Thrushes ringed during the same period, compared with none in 2022

Species	Number of juveniles and first year birds (to 30/9)						
	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Blackbird	2	6	8	11	8	8	10
Blue Tit	8	8	20	10	19	17	18
Dunnock	13	10	22	20	17	13	21
Great Tit	4	15	15	7	5	6	14
Robin	12	27	27	44	33	49	38
Wren	6	14	12	20	15	9	17

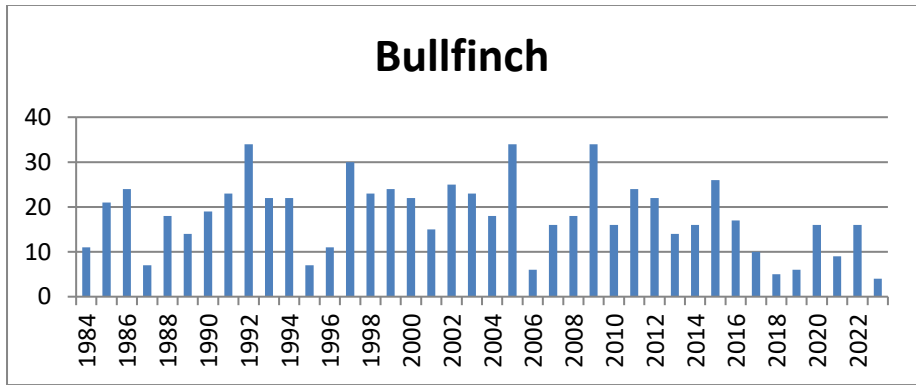
**Table 2. Productivity of six resident species**



**Bullfinch (Adult male) 5/11/23**



Disappointingly though, despite there being good overwinter survival with nine different male Bullfinches captured, there were only three females and four youngsters found, the lowest ever productivity here - see Figure I below. Ash dieback is rife on the site and ash keys are one of the favoured food sources for the species according to The Tree Council [www.treecouncil.org.uk](http://www.treecouncil.org.uk)



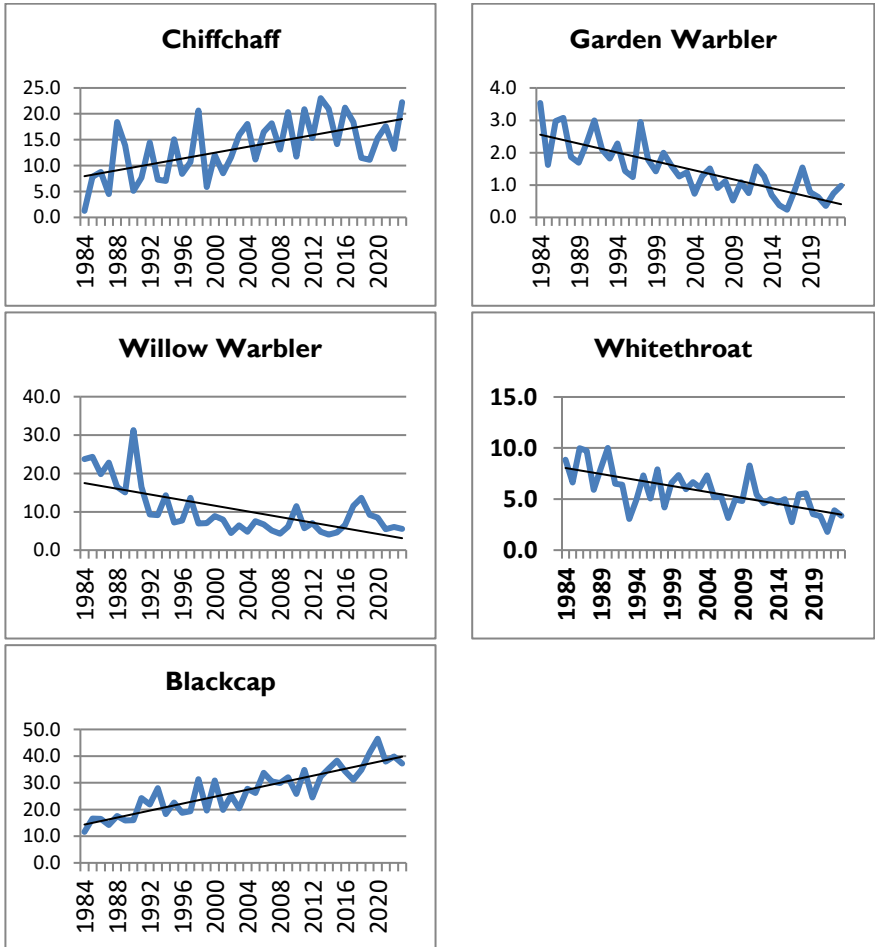
**Figure I. Annual totals of first year/juvenile Bullfinches**

**Migrants: Winners and Losers over 40 years**

The following charts show how the percentage (of all new birds) of the most frequently ringed migrant species has changed over the years at Cissbury, and these reflect national trends. Those which brave the challenge of wintering south of the Sahara (Whitethroat, Garden Warbler and Willow Warbler) have declined, while those which winter around the Mediterranean (Blackcap and Chiffchaff) have increased.

There will be inevitable fluctuations in our numbers from year to year depending on the amount of ringing effort during times of peak migration of the species concerned, but population trends from the BTO Breeding Bird Survey show a population increase between 1995 and 2020 of 194% for Blackcap and 118% for Chiffchaff, while Garden Warbler, Whitethroat and Willow Warbler populations in the UK have decreased by 29%, 20% and 10%

respectively. Taking the Willow Warbler trends in just England, the decrease is sharper, at 48%, but in Scotland it has increased by 35% !



**Figure 2. 40 years of five migrant species at Cissbury (as a percentage of new birds ringed each year)**

While we still have Whitethroats breeding on the site, and the occasional Lesser Whitethroat, we have lost breeding Willow and Garden Warblers. The last year in which we trapped juvenile Willow Warblers before migration time was in 2008; in the case of Garden Warblers it was 2011.

Definitely worthy of a mention here was a female Garden Warbler, ringed as an adult on 1 May 1999 which returned virtually each breeding season to 2007. By then she was in at least her 10th year of life, and with a minimum of nine return migration journeys across the Sahara, each over 6,000 miles.

### **Survivors, Controls & Recoveries**

Having a known date of ringing gives an indication of the age of an individual if it is recaptured, e.g. if a bird is a known adult when it is ringed, it is at least into its second calendar year, so if it is caught again the following year it will be into its third year of life.

Below are examples of older individuals recaptured in 2023, with estimated age.

<b>Species</b>	<b>Ringed</b>	<b>Age/Sex</b>	<b>Retrapped</b>	<b>Notes</b>
Blackbird	11/3/17	Second year male	4/6/23	3 <sup>rd</sup> recapture, 8 <sup>th</sup> calendar year
Blackbird	21/4/17	Second year male	20/5/23	3 <sup>rd</sup> recapture, 8 <sup>th</sup> calendar year
Blue Tit	15/8/18	Juvenile	5/11/23	2 <sup>nd</sup> recapture, 6 <sup>th</sup> calendar year
Chiffchaff	21/7/19	Juvenile	24/6/23	3 <sup>rd</sup> recapture, 5 <sup>th</sup> calendar year
Firecrest	17/10/21	Unknown(female)	19/2/23	5 <sup>th</sup> recapture, 3 <sup>rd</sup> calendar year (min)
Goldfinch	5/1/20	Adult (i.e. hatched before 2019)	22/10/23	1 <sup>st</sup> recapture, 5 <sup>th</sup> calendar year
Long-tailed Tit	4/11/18	Unknown	5/11/23	6 <sup>th</sup> recapture 6 <sup>th</sup> calendar year
Robin	29/7/19	First year	4/6/23	1 <sup>st</sup> recapture, 5 <sup>th</sup> calendar year

Just two birds were caught at Cissbury which had been ringed elsewhere:

Species	Age/Sex	Date controlled	Ringed at	Date
Blackcap	1st year Female	4/10/23	Charleston Reedbed (East Sussex)	30/9/23
Chiffchaff	Adult	14/9/23	Details still awaited	

Birds ringed at Cissbury which were found elsewhere were:

Species	Age/Sex	Date Ringed	Found at	Date
Willow Warbler	Adult	16/4/23	Leith Hill (Surrey) (by a ringer)	12/6/23
Chiffchaff	Adult	20/5/23	Fawley (Hants) (by a ringer)	8/7/23
Blackcap	1 <sup>st</sup> year male	3/9/23	Gibraltar (by a ringer)	31/10/23

The Blackcap is our first recovery in Gibraltar, where Chrissi was ringing earlier in the year!

## **Summary**

In the forty years since 1984 the number of new birds ringed at Cissbury, according to our database, is 47,695 and 60 different species have been encountered, though a Reed Bunting in February 2024 raised the total to 61. The rarest of these was a Barred Warbler (2011), and other species featuring just once were a Corn Bunting (1998) and a Whinchat (1987). Making two appearances were Fieldfare (both 2011), Mistle Thrush (1993, 2013), Nuthatch (2012, 2023), Stonechat (1997, 2017) and Woodcock (2004, 2011). Other infrequently encountered species are Coal Tit (6), Cuckoo (3), Kestrel (9 plus a control in 1991 ringed in Strathclyde that summer), Ring Ouzel (9), Tree Pipit (7), Wood Warbler (8) and Yellow-browed Warbler (3).

Other ringers who have made the most contribution to the efforts over the past 40 years have been both Brian Clay (Group Secretary) and Phil Clay (Group Leader), Martin Banks, Ralph Hartfree, Chris Fox, David King, the late Bill Woodford and his wife Vanessa.

## **Acknowledgments**

The Worthing Conservation Volunteers visited on 6 March and carried out some much needed cutting, and we were able to show them a handful of the 11 birds we caught during the morning. Various members of the team were also able to do some maintenance work, and my husband Roger also valiantly wielded his newly acquired mini chainsaw to good effect.

Thanks again are due to Brian who oversees the return of data to the BTO; to Chrissi, David, Peter, Mya, Toby, Alex, Jack and Kate for their involvement with the ringing activities during the year; also to the National Trust for their support for ringing at the site and for attending to the breach in the fence which was allowing livestock in; and to the owners of the track for allowing vehicular access and parking near to the site.

Finally – our oddest encounter of 2023 was beside the F net ride on 7 October, occasioning a call to the police for its removal!



# Ringling in Ladywell 2023

## John Newnham

This, the seventeenth year of ringling and study of birds using the Ladywell valley, was the least active with just 19 mist-netting sessions and one visit when just the valley's nest boxes were inspected. The total number of birds ringed (1658), however, was only 29 fewer than the total from 35 sessions in 2022 and marginally higher than the average 1514 ringed during the previous 16 years. The ringling totals and number of mist-netting session in each of the years are shown in the following table.

Year	Sessions	Ringling total
2007	22	472
2008	29	600
2009	33	764
2010	34	1202
2011	39	1602
2012	31	711
2013	37	1069
2014	25	654
2015	38	2120
2016	37	2057
2017	39	2941
2018	40	2252
2019	35	2381
2020	23	2373
2021	35	1343
2022	35	1687
2023	19	1658

**Table 1:-** The numbers of ringling sessions and birds ringed in Ladywell in each year (2007-2023).

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
<b>2007-22 sessions</b>	19	12	22	42	41	40	51	74	85	70	45	30
<b>Average catch (2007-22)</b>	50	43	32	35	39	32	46	64	92	74	57	55
<b>2023 sessions</b>	0	0	0	0	3	2	0	6	4	4	0	0
<b>Average catch (2023)</b>	0	0	0	0	50	44	0	97	134	125	0	0

**Table 2:-** The number of ringing sessions in each month and the average monthly catch (2007-22 and 2023).

The ringing effort was not spread across the year with no sessions from January until 14<sup>th</sup> May, no ringing in July and the last session on the early date of 22<sup>nd</sup> October. At least the productive autumn season was reasonably covered. These features are clearly shown in Table 2. Not only were fewer ringing sessions conducted in 2023 but during seven months there was no ringing done in the valley. Table 3 shows only in September has there been ringing in each of the 17 years, with May, June, August and October only missing out in one year and July in two, including 2023. The Ladywell review from 2007 written by John Crix and published in the 2007 Shoreham District Ornithological Society report stated

*“On a much more positive note, the last five ringing sessions of the year (between 17th Nov and 30th Dec) produced 152 new birds and 164 retraps - an average in excess of 60 birds a session. Thus John Newnham was proved correct in his prediction that "Ladywell could be a cracking winter ringing site".*

Clearly the winter enthusiasm has waned as these are the months with the least activity and the months I regularly spend in Western Australia.

Ja	Fe	Ma	Ap	Ma	Ju	Ju	Au	Se	Oc	No	De
n	b	r	r	y	n	l	g	p	t	v	c
10	7	11	15	16	16	15	16	17	16	15	12

**Table 3:-** For each month the number of years at least one ringing session has occurred in Ladywell during that month.

Species	2007-2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	TOTALS
Sparrowhawk	13		2					1	2	2	1	21
Kestrel	5	2				1			2			10
Moorhen									2			2
Water Rail				1								1
Snipe									1			1
Stock Dove	3	1			1	1			1		3	10
Woodpigeon	27	2	7	4	9	5	6	8	12	2	3	85
Tawny Owl	1			1			1					3
Kingfisher	19	8	9	7	10	11	4	10	3	5	8	94
Green Woodpecker	33	3	1	2		1	1	3	2	5	2	53
Great Spotted Woodpecker	43	7	5	3	5	10	6	7	6	1	1	93
Swallow	19											19
House Martin	139		1	4						5		149
Tree Pipit					2		1				1	4
Meadow Pipit	4											4
Grey Wagtail	2		2			2	1	3		1	2	13
Wren	234	31	52	64	63	59	52	45	17	32	28	677
Dunnock	243	22	48	34	45	45	60	57	42	42	29	667
Robin	303	30	59	77	49	52	76	61	56	60	39	862
Nightingale			1				1					2
Redstart	4			2	1	3			2			12
Stonechat		1										1
Blackbird	381	26	67	79	41	71	44	29	46	39	28	851
Song Thrush	142	19	28	43	35	58	39	37	38	31	27	497
Redwing	18	8	6	18	5	9	2	1	10	3	1	81
Mistle Thrush	5				1							6
Cetti's Warbler	4	3	1	4	3	5	10	9	1	4	3	47
Grasshopper Warbler	6			1				1		1	1	10
Sedge Warbler	11			4	7	10	6	3	4		2	47
Reed Warbler	262	23	69	71	105	99	115	68	52	78	32	974
Dartford Warbler											1	1
Lesser Whitethroat	11	2	6	5	7	4	3		4	7	4	53
Whitethroat	111	3	18	18	28	25	23	18	28	22	44	338
Garden Warbler	11		10	12	13	14	12	11	17	9	16	125
Blackcap	710	80	356	329	575	567	610	585	297	361	230	4700
Yellow-browed Warbler					1			1				2
Wood Warbler			1			1						2



Chiffchaff	755	14 5	67 3	67 9	10 10	51 3	50 5	82 1	25 4	38 0	59 8	6333
Willow Warbler	231	4	15 5	27 4	35 0	19 1	33 4	31 6	15 6	17 3	25 5	2439
Goldcrest	112	27	21 8	70	26 5	71	82	52	10	81	41	1029
Firecrest	14	2	10	4	15	7	13	9	1	6	6	87
Spotted Flycatcher	12		2	2	2		1	1	2		2	24
Pied Flycatcher										1	1	2
Long-tailed Tit	267	28	40	30	32	26	47	18	19	45	10	562
Marsh Tit						1						1
Coal Tit			1	1		2						4
Blue Tit	1079	63	11 6	85	11 4	16 4	18 4	81	12 0	12 1	12 3	2250
Great Tit	481	65	61	67	70	10 9	78	59	54	84	43	1171
Nuthatch	23	1			1							25
Treecreeper	52	4	6	6	4	6	10	6	2	6	3	105
Starling											2	2
Jay	15	1	3	1	1	1	2	3				27
Magpie	7	1				2			1			11
Jackdaw	5	15	9	1		5	6		2	1		44
Rook	1											1
Carrion Crow	1											1
House Sparrow	1											1
Chaffinch	324	19	44	30	17	22	15	16	16	11	4	518
Greenfinch	142	2	7	6	2	7	8		9	6	9	198
Goldfinch	109	4	15	9	24	71	21	28	43	56	25	405
Siskin	1		3									4
Lesser Redpoll	1		8	6	17			1		3	30	66
Bullfinch	9	2		1	9		1	1	2			25
Yellowhammer										1		1
Reed Bunting	14			2	2	1	1	3	7	2		32
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>6420</b>	<b>65 4</b>	<b>21 20</b>	<b>20 57</b>	<b>29 41</b>	<b>22 52</b>	<b>23 81</b>	<b>23 73</b>	<b>13 43</b>	<b>16 87</b>	<b>16 57</b>	<b>25885</b>

**Table 4:-** The totals (2007-13) and annual totals 2014-2023 for each species ringed in Ladywell.

As last year, the combination of poor weather and team availability were the main constraints again in 2023. A few years ago most of the ringers were retired pensioners but now with just one retired member of the team it is difficult to switch ringing plans at short notice; indeed most sessions were planned for weekends. On several occasions when a workable team was available a forecast with a high probability of precipitation meant cancellation

and a lost ringing opportunity. Like most recent years warbler catches in the autumn were increased by the use of 'call-back' lures.

Table 4 above lists the 65 different species ringed in Ladywell and shows that between 27 (in 2007) and 42 (in 2010) different species have been ringed in each year. The 39 species ringed in 2023 is close to the average for the previous 16 years. Over the 19 ringing sessions in 2023 an average of 14 different species were trapped with a range of ten (on 27<sup>th</sup> May and 10<sup>th</sup> September) to 18 (on 16<sup>th</sup> August and 23<sup>rd</sup> September). Table 4 shows the totals of each species ringed in Ladywell for the years 2007 to 2023; the totals for the years 2007 to 2013 are combined. Two Starlings ringed in May and a Dartford Warbler, trapped and ringed on 23<sup>rd</sup> September, were new species to be ringed in the valley, the Dartford Warbler is illustrated below. The first Pied Flycatcher was ringed in Ladywell last year and the second was trapped on 22<sup>nd</sup> August.



*First calendar year Dartford Warbler Ladywell 23<sup>rd</sup> September 2023*

The other exceptional points are marked in yellow in Table 4. For the second year just one Great Spotted Woodpecker was ringed and record low totals included just four Chaffinches, ten Long-tailed Tits and 43 Great Tits. Conversely record high figures were 44 Common Whitethroats, 16 Garden Warblers and 30 Lesser Redpolls. One of the Willow Warblers trapped on 9<sup>th</sup> August was not only larger than the other Willow Warblers trapped that



*First calendar year northern Willow Warbler (P.trochilus acredula) Ladywell 9<sup>th</sup> August 2023.*

morning but lacked the bright lemon colouration associated with young Willow Warblers of the British race and was likely to be of the race *acredula*.

The red type in Table 4 shows the species on the red list of high conservation concern (BoCC5) and amount to just 13 individuals in 2023.

Table 5 shows the species for which over a thousand captures have been recorded; for Blue, Great and Long-tailed Tit and Dunnock the retraps numbers are higher than ringing figures. The figures for Willow Warbler show very few are retrapped with migratory birds moving on fairly quickly. The

ringing activity during 2023 brought no change in order to that at the end of 2021 and 2022.

Species	New	Retrap	Total
Chiffchaff	6333	326	6659
Blue Tit	2250	2868	5118
Blackcap	4700	421	5121
Great Tit	1171	1679	2850
Willow Warbler	2439	17	2456
Robin	862	818	1680
Dunnock	667	929	1596
Blackbird	851	595	1446
Reed Warbler	974	451	1425
Long-tailed Tit	562	699	1261
Wren	677	576	1253
Goldcrest	1029	205	1234

**Table 5:-** The total number of handlings (new birds and retraps) for species with greater than 1000 handlings in Ladywell (2007-2023).

Exciting aspects of ringing come from hearing birds ringed in the valley have been found elsewhere (a recovery) or trapping a bird carrying a ring placed elsewhere (a control). Just one bird was trapped which had been ringed elsewhere (control) whilst four ringed in Ladywell were recovered or controlled later. The details of these few movements are shown in the following two tables.

Ring No.	Species	Date Ladywell	Age/ Sex	Ringing date	Age/ Sex	Ringing site	Distance	Interval
PLE524	Chiffchaff	01/10/2023	3	20/08/2023	3j	Edinburgh, Lothians	601km ESE	42 days

**Table 6:** The details of birds caught in Ladywell during 2023 and ringed elsewhere (3= hatched in calendar year; additional j signifies in juvenile plumage; 4=hatched before current calendar year).

Ring No	Species	Ringing date	Age/ Sex	Recovery date	Age	Recovery location	Distance	Interval
AFZ6 109	Reed Warbler	13/08/2022	3	26/05/2023	4M	Steypning	6km N	286 days
AFV2 883	Cetti's Warbler	16/07/2022	3J	28/06/2023	4M	Steypning	6km N	347 days
SH31 886	Kingfisher	25/06/2023	3	21/07/2023	3	Steypning	6km N	26 days
NTY3 90	Chiffchaff	08/05/2022	4	09/08/2023	4	Steypning	6km N	458 days

**Table 7:** Details of birds ringed in Ladywell and all controlled at The Mumbles Steypning.

In 2022 most of the local interchanges were between Ladywell and the ringing site on the north scarp of Cissbury Ring whilst in 2023 most involved Phil Clay's ringing site at Steypning.

Handling birds and ringing provides considerably more information about population size and structure, species longevity and other aspects of avian biology than just their movements. Retrapping individuals provide some interesting insights into individual's behaviour. During the year 178 different birds of 20 species were retrapped, most, as shown in Table 8 were birds ringed earlier in the year with numbers decreasing rapidly for birds ringed in earlier years.

Years since ringing	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Number	121	24	14	6	8	1	2	2

**Table 8:** The number of individuals from each year re-trapped in 2023.

Each session report throughout the year included the detailed histories of the more interesting retraps. The most retrapped species was again Blue Tit but with only with 32 different individuals involved. Following were Blackbird (20 individuals), Dunnock (19), Reed Warbler (18), Robin (15), Blackcap (14), Chiffchaff (11), Wren (11) and Great Tit (9)

Ring No.	Species	Cap	Date	Age Code	Sex	Subsite	Interval
LH59627	Blackbird	N	23/09/2015	3	M	P2	
		R	09/12/2015	3	M	K	0y 077d
		R	14/04/2016	5	M	P2	0y 204d
		R	08/06/2016	5	M	P3	0y 259d
		R	09/10/2016	4	M	P2	1y 017d
		R	09/08/2022	6	M	L1	6y 322d
		R	16/08/2023	4	M	L1	7y 329d
Z883437	Reed Warbler	N	08/05/2016	4		P1	
		R	18/06/2016	4	F	P2	0y 041d
		R	07/05/2017	4		P2	0y 364d
		R	09/05/2018	4	F	P2	2y 001d
		R	20/05/2019	4	F	K2	3y 012d
		R	03/06/2022	4	F	P2	6y 027d
		R	09/07/2022	4	F	P2	6y 063d
		R	21/05/2023	4	F	K	7y 014d
R	27/05/2023	4	F	P2	7y 020d		
AYE2510	Blue Tit	N	03/10/2018	3		P2	
		R	09/10/2018	3		P2	0y 006d
		R	17/10/2018	3		P3	0y 014d
		R	25/11/2018	3		P1	0y 053d
		R	24/11/2019	4		K2	1y 052d
		R	28/09/2020	4		P1	1y 361d
		R	04/04/2021	6		K2	2y 184d
		R	08/04/2021	6		K2	2y 188d
		R	01/05/2021	6	M	K2	2y 211d
		R	07/11/2021	4		K2	3y 036d
		R	12/12/2021	4		K2	3y 071d
		R	26/03/2022	6		K2	3y 175d
		R	10/04/2022	6		K2	3y 190d
		R	18/04/2022	6	M	K2	3y 198d
R	01/05/2022	6		K2	3y 211d		
R	27/05/2023	6	M	K2	4y 237d		

**Table 9:** Details of birds retrapped in 2023 with the greatest intervals between ringing and recapture and the most captures since being ringed.

Table 9 gives the details of the Blackbird (LH59627) and Reed Warbler (Z883437) retrapped in 2023 with the greatest interval since ringing and the details of the Blue Tit (AYE2510) retrapped in 2023 with the greatest number of previous captures. Additionally, a female Blackbird ringed in October 2016, reappeared in October 2017, October 2021 and October 2023 and a male ringed as an adult in April 2017, was still present in June but disappeared until being recaptured in September 2023. Since ringing commenced in Ladywell a Chaffinch, a Blue Tit and three other Blackbirds have a seven year interval between ringing and recapture and eight resident individuals a six year interval. In the past one Blue Tit has been captured on 37 occasions, a Great Tit on 25 occasions and a Dunnock on 20 occasions so the 16 handlings of AYE2510 is still behind these individuals.

Once again the nest boxes in the valley were visited and the detailed findings logged on the British Trust for Ornithology's (BTO) Nest Record Scheme. A summary and comparison with previous years is shown in Table 10. Despite logging all the boxes on the What3Words app finding the boxes within the dense vegetation proved difficult.

Just 43% of the available boxes were occupied; the lowest percentage uptake since the first two years of the project. However, at least 104 nestlings hatched (the second-best year) of which 89 (77%) appear to have fledged, a better figure than most recent years.

As previously noted our Health and Safety (H&S) policy requires at least two permit holding ringers to be present at each session; the average number of ringers present for the 19 sessions this year was between three and four; indeed three ringers were present for six sessions, four for seven sessions and either two or five ringers for just two sessions. During the year the number of outings each team member attended was John Newnham (17), Sue Walsh and Clare Buckle (16), Becky Parangi (8), Chrissi Twitchen (6) and Emma Waller (4). Other visitors included Toby and Alex from the Cissbury ringing team, Elsa, Vicci, Harry and a party of cub-scouts from Billingham. Throughout the year Clare continued the supervision of the group's two active trainees.

	2 0 0 8	2 0 0 9	2 0 0 0	2 0 1 1	2 0 1 2	2 0 1 3	2 0 1 4	2 0 1 5	2 0 1 6	2 0 1 7	2 0 1 8	2 0 1 9	2 0 2 0	2 0 2 1	2 0 2 2	2 0 2 3
Number of boxes available	1 1	1 1	2 3	2 3	2 4	2 9	3 2	3 2	2 1	3 7	3 4	3 9	4 0	4 1	3 6	4 0
Blue Tit	3	3	8 3	1 3	1 1	1 0	9	9	1 0	1 2	1 5	1 4	-	1 5	1 5	1 1
Great Tit			3	5	2	4	7	6	6	6	6	1 0	-	8	8	6
Nuthatch					1 1								-		-	
Total occupied boxes	3	3	1 1	1 8	1 4	1 5	1 6	1 5	1 6	1 8	2 1	2 4	-	2 3	2 3	1 7
Occupancy %	2 7	2 7	4 8	7 8	5 8	5 2	5 0	4 7	7 6	4 9	6 2	6 2	-	5 6	6 4	4 3
Total eggs laid	1 9	2 8	8 9	1 4 9	1 0 7	1 0 3	1 2 6	1 1 4	9 5	1 2 0	1 3 7	1 3 9	-	1 6 0	1 3 6	1 1 6
Total pulli	1 9	2 5	7 8	1 3 0	8 3	4 4	8 8	6 9	6 7	9 5	8 6	9 9	-	7 6	9 0	1 0 4
Total young fledged	1 9	2 3	7 5	1 0 2	5 6	4 2	5 5	2 5	4 7	5 7	7 7	9 9	-	6 7	7 6	8 9
% survival egg -> fledging	1 0 0	8 2	8 4	6 8	5 2	4 1	4 4	2 2	4 9	4 8	5 8	7 1	-	4 2	5 6	7 7

**Table 10:-** Summary of Ladywell nest box scheme results 2009-2023. (No data for 2020). [Editor's note: the numbers read downwards]

During the latter part of 2022 the H&S policy was revisited to include measures set out by the BTO to prevent the further spread of the Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza. The additional measures, including the single use and regular laundering of bird bags continued throughout 2023.

On each visit, including some short visits for stocking feeders or maintenance work, a list of species recorded was logged onto the BTO's Birdtrack recording system. Considerably fewer day-lists were created in 2023 and just 66 bird species were seen during the year. Dartford Warbler was recorded for the first time bringing the total number of avian species to 120. Chiffchaff and Blackbird were the only two species recorded on each visit with Woodpigeon,.



Jackdaw, Rook, Carrion Crow, Blue Tit and Robin only missing on one visit. Several species were only recorded once during the year; these being Cormorant, Red Kite, Sand Martin, Sedge Warbler, Dartford Warbler, Redwing, Pied Flycatcher, House Sparrow, Pied Wagtail and Tree Pipit. The details of all bird species recorded in the valley in 2023 are given in Appendix I Throughout the year considerable 'gardening' was needed to maintain the net rides in operable conditions; this year the usual tasks of brush-cutting, raking and clearing of fallen branches was undertaken. I would like to extend our continued gratitude and thanks to the college authorities and staff, particularly Jon Hutcheon the farm manager, and to Hugh and Christopher Passmore of Applesham Farm for their on-going interest, help and support with the ringing in Ladywell. Sometimes the landowners visit us during a ringing session and we are always pleased to see them.

During the year the team continued inputting all the ringing data into the BTO's on-line recording software (DeMon) and I thank the team members who take turns keying the data into DeMon. My thanks also to Sue, Clare and Chrissi who have done much of the organisation of ringing sessions this year. The session reports for 2023 to feed back to landowners, interested college staff, local birders and ringers who have followed the work done in Ladywell have been completed by Sue, Clare or me but I thank team members for their photographs some which are included in this summary. The session reports, like those from local ringing at Cissbury and Steyning, are copied to the e-users group of the Shoreham District Ornithological Society. Finally, I thank Sue, Chrissi and Clare for correcting this review.

## Appendix 1. Listing of birds recorded in Ladywell (2007 to 2022) and 2023.

Species	Days 2007/22	Days 2023	Species	Days 2007/22	Days 2023
Canada Goose	7		Marsh Tit	1	
Greylag Goose	4		Blue Tit	562	18
Mute Swan	3		Great Tit	547	14
Shelduck	7		Skylark	71	
Mandarin Duck	1		Sand Martin	9	1
Mallard	350	5	Swallow	310	12
Teal	47		House Martin	268	6
[Helmeted Guineafowl]	39		Cetti's Warbler	214	15
Pheasant	476	12	Longtailed Tit	415	6
Redlegged Partridge	19		Wood Warbler	2	
Swift	114	2	Yellow-browed Warbler	3	
Cuckoo	15		Willow Warbler	184	8
Feral Pigeon	455	16	Chiffchaff	524	19
Stock Dove	478	17	Sedge Warbler	45	1
Woodpigeon	576	18	Reed Warbler	330	11
Collared Dove	178	2	Dartford Warbler		1
Water Rail	47		Grasshopper Warbler	9	2
Moorhen	548	14	Blackcap	425	17
Coot	28		Garden Warbler	61	7
Little Grebe	53		Lesser Whitethroat	68	3
Lapwing	10		Whitethroat	201	13
Golden Plover	2		Firecrest	61	5
Whimbrel	1		Goldcrest	202	8
Curlew	2		Wren	563	17
Woodcock	5		Nuthatch	87	
Snipe	7		Treecreeper	202	5
Green Sandpiper	2		Starling	228	3
Blackheaded Gull	295	4	Song Thrush	438	15
Mediterranean Gull	5		Mistle Thrush	225	3
Common Gull	82		Redwing	114	1
Great Blackbacked Gull	9		Blackbird	576	19
Herring Gull	528	17	Fieldfare	25	
Lesser Blackbacked Gull	13		Spotted Flycatcher	48	2

[Common/Arctic Tern]	1		Robin	554	18
Cormorant	113	1	Nightingale	5	
Cattle Egret	1		Pied Flycatcher	2	1
Grey Heron	258	5	Black Redstart	1	
Little Egret	204	2	Redstart	15	
Osprey	2		Whinchat	2	
Honey-buzzard	2		Stonechat	1	
Sparrowhawk	299	9	Wheatear	1	
Hen Harrier	1		House Sparrow	13	1
Red Kite	36	1	Dunnock	527	17
Buzzard	482	16	Yellow Wagtail	8	
Barn Owl	4		Grey Wagtail	108	2
Tawny Owl	123	4	Pied/White Wagtail	185	1
Kingfisher	151	9	Meadow Pipit	43	
Great Spotted Woodpecker	479	11	Tree Pipit	6	1
Green Woodpecker	507	15	Chaffinch	455	4
Kestrel	339	5	Brambling	8	
Hobby	28		Hawfinch	1	
Peregrine	119	6	Bullfinch	45	
Great Grey Shrike	4		Greenfinch	273	11
Jay	383	10	Linnet	13	
Magpie	532	17	Lesser Redpoll	24	2
Jackdaw	580	18	Common Crossbill	1	
Rook	554	18	Goldfinch	409	16
Carrion Crow	576	18	Siskin	29	
Raven	62	5	Yellowhammer	2	
Coal Tit	4		Reed Bunting	56	

## Image Gallery





## Photograph acknowledgments

The source of images is often clear from the context or other attribution and those are not listed here. Note also that some of the bird photographs are illustrative; they may not be of the actual bird referred to in the account.

Front cover: Goldeneye: Brooklands: Ron Bewley

Page 52 upper: Goldeneye: Brooklands: Ron Bewley

Page 52 lower: Dunlin: Adur: Richard Allan

Page 53 upper: Whimbrel: Adur: Richard Allan

Page 53 lower: Curlew Sandpiper: Adur: Richard Allan

Back cover: Bar-tailed Godwit: Adur: Richard Allan

## Society Officers and the User Group

SDOS role	Name	E-Mail
Honorary President	John Newnham	president@sdos.org
<b>COUNCIL</b>		council@sdos.org
Chair	Tony Benton	chair@sdos.org
Treasurer	Tim Holter	treasurer@sdos.org
Secretary	Sue Miles	secretary@sdos.org
Membership Secretary	Sue Miles	memsec@sdos.org
Minutes Secretary	Jenny Holter	minutes@sdos.org
Field Meetings Coordinator	Richard Nowak	field.events@sdos.org
Newsletter Editor	Roger Smith	newsletter@sdos.org
IT Coordinator	Jo Whiting	itsupport@sdos.org
Legal Advisor	Sarah Hunt	sarah.hunt@sdos.org
Council Member	Richard Allan	richard.allan@sdos.org

If you use an email address but are not a member of the User Group then please consider joining (<https://groups.io/g/sdos/join>) to make sure you receive up-to-date information about SDOS activities.

OTHER CONTACTS		
Garden Bird Recorder	Simeon Elliott	gardenbirdsurvey@sdos.org
IT Consultant	Peter Wyld	peter.wyld@sdos.org
ADMINISTRATION TEAMS		
GENERAL ENQUIRIES (‘Contact Us’ on website)	Tony Benton Sue Miles Tim Holter	contact@sdos.org
MEMBER ADMIN ( <a href="http://www.membermojo.co.uk">www.membermojo.co.uk</a> )	Sue Miles Tim Holter Peter Wyld	contact@sdos.org
USER GROUP ( <a href="http://www.groups.io">www.groups.io</a> )	Jo Whiting	admin@sdos.org
SOCIAL MEDIA (Public)		
Contacts for social media accounts	Richard Allan Alan Duffy	socialmedia@sdos.org

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